



Daily PIB Summary

12 Aug, 2026

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1. WORLD ELEPHANT DAY



- India is home to the **Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*)**, an endangered species.
- Elephant conservation in India is supported through **Project Elephant**, launched in **1992**.
- Major concerns include **habitat loss, fragmentation, human-elephant conflict, poaching and railway/road accidents**.
- Conservation increasingly focuses on protecting **elephant corridors and connected habitats**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

World Elephant Day

- Observed annually on **12 August**.
- Aims to:
 - Raise awareness about elephant conservation.
 - Highlight threats to elephants.
 - Promote protection of elephant habitats.
 - Encourage coexistence between people and elephants.

Asian Elephant

- Scientific name: ***Elephas maximus***.
- Found in India and other parts of South and Southeast Asia.
- Listed as **Endangered** on the IUCN Red List.
- India contains the **largest population of Asian elephants**.

KEY POINTS

Project Elephant

- Launched in **1992** by the Government of India.

- Centrally Sponsored Scheme of the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)**.
- Major objectives:
 - Protect viable elephant populations.
 - Conserve elephant habitats and corridors.
 - Reduce human-elephant conflict.
 - Support welfare of captive elephants.

Major Threats

- Habitat fragmentation due to infrastructure and land-use change.
- Loss of traditional elephant corridors.
- Human-elephant conflict.
- Electrocution and railway collisions.
- Poaching and illegal trade.

SIGNIFICANCE

- Elephants are important **ecosystem engineers** because their movement and feeding can modify vegetation and create pathways and water-access opportunities for other species.
- Protecting elephant corridors also helps conserve wider **forest ecosystems and biodiversity**.
- Reducing conflict is essential for both **wildlife conservation and local livelihoods**.

CHALLENGES

- Expansion of roads, railways, mining and other infrastructure through elephant habitats.
- Increasing human settlements around forests.
- Fragmentation of migratory routes.
- Difficulty in balancing development with wildlife movement.

WAY FORWARD

- Secure and restore **elephant corridors**.
- Integrate wildlife passages into infrastructure projects.
- Strengthen early-warning systems and community participation.
- Improve compensation and conflict-management mechanisms.
- Use landscape-level conservation rather than isolated protected areas.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Asian Elephant

- **Scientific name:** *Elephas maximus*
- **IUCN status:** Endangered
- **India:** Largest range-country population of Asian elephants.
- **Project Elephant:** Launched in 1992.

Elephant vs Mammoth

- Asian and African elephants are living elephant species.
- **Woolly mammoth** is extinct.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding elephants in India:

1. The Asian elephant is classified as Endangered on the IUCN Red List.
2. Project Elephant was launched in India in 1992.
3. Conservation of elephant corridors is important for reducing habitat fragmentation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (d)

2. ANGANWADI-CUM-CRECHES UNDER PALNA



- **Palna** is a component of **Mission Shakti**.
- It provides **quality crèche facilities** for children of working mothers, while also supporting their nutrition, health and early development.

- **Anganwadi-cum-Creches (AWCCs)** integrate childcare services with existing Anganwadi infrastructure.
- The initiative aims to support **women's participation in the workforce** by addressing childcare needs.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Palna

- Implemented by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)**.
- Focuses on providing **day-care facilities** for young children.
- It seeks to create a safe environment where children receive care while parents are at work.

Anganwadi-cum-Creche

- Uses existing **Anganwadi Centres** as a platform for providing crèche services.
- Creates convergence between childcare, nutrition and early childhood development services.

KEY SERVICES

- Safe and secure day-care.
- **Nutrition and supplementary feeding.**
- Health check-ups and growth monitoring.
- Immunisation support through convergence with health services.
- Early stimulation and **pre-school education**.
- Rest and sleeping facilities for children.

SIGNIFICANCE

Women's Workforce Participation

- Reliable childcare can reduce one of the major barriers to women's employment.
- Supports the broader objective of **women-led development**.

Early Childhood Development

- Provides care, nutrition and early learning during the crucial early years of childhood.

Convergence

- Utilises existing Anganwadi infrastructure and personnel.
- Links childcare with India's wider **nutrition and early-childhood development ecosystem**.

Social Protection

- Particularly useful for children of working women from **low-income and vulnerable households**.

CHALLENGES

- Adequate availability of trained childcare workers.
- Maintaining consistent standards of safety and nutrition.
- Infrastructure and sanitation requirements.
- Ensuring accessibility for working women in different employment settings.

WAY FORWARD

- Expand AWCC coverage in areas with high demand for childcare.
- Strengthen training of childcare personnel.
- Ensure child-safety protocols and regular monitoring.
- Improve convergence with health, nutrition and early-learning services.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Mission Shakti

A Government initiative focused on **women's safety, security and empowerment**.

It has two broad components:

- **Sambal**: Safety and security of women.
- **Samarthya**: Empowerment of women.

Palna falls under **Samarthya**.

Remember

Palna → **Crèche/day-care** → **Working women** → **Childcare + nutrition + early development**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding Palna:

1. Palna is a component of Mission Shakti.
2. Anganwadi-cum-Creches under Palna provide day-care facilities for children.
3. The initiative also seeks to facilitate women's participation in the workforce.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) **1, 2 and 3**

Answer: (d)

3. PPP MODEL FOR EARTH OBSERVATION SATELLITE CONSTELLATIONS



- India is encouraging greater **private-sector participation in the space sector**.
- PPP-based EO constellations can combine **government requirements, private investment, satellite technology and commercial capabilities**.
- The objective is to improve access to **high-quality, timely Earth-observation data** for governance, agriculture, disaster management, infrastructure and other applications.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Earth Observation Satellites

EO satellites collect information about Earth's:

- Land and vegetation.
- Oceans and water bodies.
- Atmosphere.
- Weather and climate.
- Urban and infrastructure development.

Applications include:

- Agriculture and crop monitoring.
- Disaster management.
- Forest and biodiversity monitoring.
- Urban planning.
- Water-resource management.
- Defence and strategic applications.

PPP in Space

Under a PPP approach:

- Government can act as an **anchor customer/user**.

- Private entities can contribute **capital, technology and operational capabilities**.
- Satellite data and services can be supplied to both government and commercial users.

KEY POINTS

- I. Encourages development of **satellite constellations rather than relying only on individual satellites**.
- II. Multiple satellites can provide:
 - A. Higher revisit frequency.
 - B. Wider geographic coverage.
 - C. More frequent monitoring.
- III. Private participation can accelerate **innovation and deployment**.
- IV. Supports India's broader **space-sector reforms and commercialisation**.

SIGNIFICANCE

Better Governance

Frequent EO data can support evidence-based decisions in:

- Agriculture.
- Water management.
- Infrastructure.
- Disaster response.

Disaster Management

Near-real-time imagery can assist in monitoring:

- Floods.
- Cyclones.
- Landslides.
- Forest fires.

Space Economy

- Creates opportunities for Indian **space startups and private companies**.
- Encourages domestic satellite manufacturing and downstream space-data services.

Strategic Capability

- Strengthens India's independent access to geospatial information.
- Supports maritime, environmental and national-security applications.

CHALLENGES

- High capital requirements.
- Data security and privacy concerns.

- Need for interoperability between government and private systems.
- Regulatory and spectrum-related issues.
- Ensuring reliable long-term data availability.

WAY FORWARD

- Develop clear PPP procurement and revenue-sharing frameworks.
- Ensure secure and standardised data-sharing mechanisms.
- Encourage indigenous satellite and sensor technologies.
- Strengthen **IN-SPACE** as a facilitator of private-sector participation.
- Promote open innovation and downstream applications using EO data.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Earth Observation vs Communication Satellites

- **EO satellites:** Observe Earth's surface, atmosphere and environment.
- **Communication satellites:** Primarily provide communication and broadcasting services.

Why a Constellation?

- **More satellites → shorter revisit time → more frequent observations.**

India's Space-Sector Reform

- The **Indian Space Policy 2023** provides a framework for greater participation of non-government entities across the space value chain.
- **IN-SPACE** acts as a single-window interface to facilitate and promote private participation in the Indian space sector.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding Earth Observation satellite constellations:

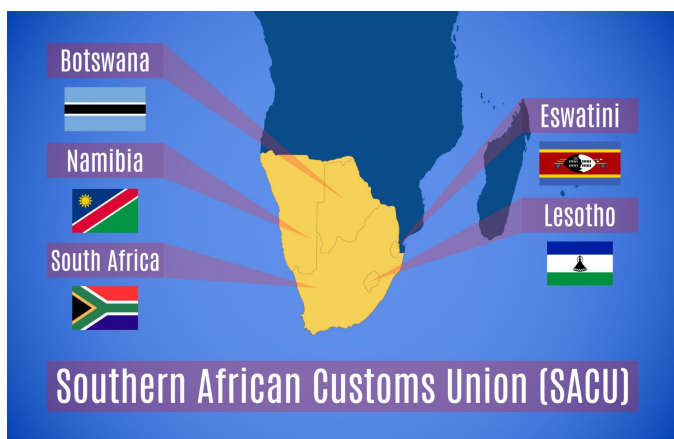
1. A constellation of multiple satellites can provide more frequent observations of a given region than a single satellite.
2. Earth Observation data can be used for agriculture and disaster management.
3. Public-private partnerships can facilitate private-sector participation in satellite-based services.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) **1, 2 and 3**

Answer: (d)

4. INDIA–SACU: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR PREFERENTIAL TRADE AGREEMENT



- The ToR establishes the **framework and scope for future PTA negotiations**.
- SACU comprises **South Africa, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia**.
- The proposed PTA aims to expand **bilateral trade, market access and economic cooperation** between India and SACU.
- It can strengthen India's economic engagement with **Southern Africa** and diversify India's trade partnerships.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

What is SACU?

- I. **Southern African Customs Union (SACU)** is the world's **oldest existing customs union**.
- II. Established in **1910** in its modern form.
- III. Member countries:
 - A. **Botswana**
 - B. **Eswatini**
 - C. **Lesotho**
 - D. **Namibia**
 - E. **South Africa**

What is a PTA?

- A **Preferential Trade Agreement** provides preferential tariff treatment to selected goods traded between participating countries.
- It is generally **less comprehensive than a Free Trade Agreement (FTA)**.

KEY POINTS

- I. The **ToR** provides the basis for negotiating the proposed PTA.
- II. Negotiations can focus on:
 - A. Tariff concessions.
 - B. Market access.
 - C. Trade facilitation.
 - D. Rules and procedures governing preferential trade.
- III. The agreement could improve opportunities for Indian exporters in Southern African markets.
- IV. SACU's integrated customs framework makes engagement with the bloc strategically important.

SIGNIFICANCE

Trade Diversification

- Expands India's trade presence in **Africa**.
- Reduces excessive dependence on a limited number of markets.

Export Opportunities

Potential areas include:

- Pharmaceuticals.
- Automobiles and auto components.
- Engineering goods.
- Textiles.
- Machinery.
- Agricultural and processed products.

India–Africa Partnership

- Strengthens India's **South–South cooperation** with African countries.
- Complements India's broader economic engagement with Africa.

Strategic Importance

- Southern Africa has importance for India's access to **Indian Ocean and Atlantic-linked trade routes**.
- Stronger economic ties can support India's wider engagement with the Global South.

CHALLENGES



- Different levels of economic development among negotiating partners.
- Sensitive domestic sectors may require protection.
- Negotiations on tariff concessions can be complex.
- SACU operates as a customs union, requiring coordination among its members.

WAY FORWARD

- Pursue balanced tariff concessions benefiting both sides.
- Address non-tariff barriers and improve trade facilitation.
- Expand cooperation in **investment, digital trade, logistics and value chains**.
- Encourage greater participation of Indian MSMEs in African markets.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

SACU — REMEMBER

B-E-L-N-S

- **B**otswana
- **E**swatini
- **L**esotho
- **N**amibia
- **S**outh Africa

Headquarters: Windhoek, Namibia.

PTA vs FTA

- **PTA:** Preferential tariffs for selected products.
- **FTA:** Generally provides much broader elimination/reduction of tariffs among members.

Customs Union

A customs union has:

- **Free/reduced internal trade barriers**, and
- a **common external tariff** towards non-members.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding SACU:

1. SACU comprises five countries.
2. South Africa is a member of SACU.
3. SACU is a customs union.
4. A Preferential Trade Agreement necessarily eliminates all tariffs on all goods between its members.

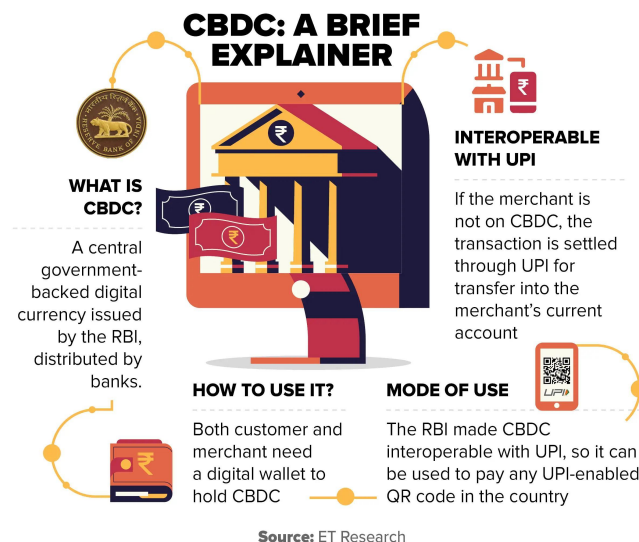
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (c) 2, 3 and 4 only
- (d) **1, 2 and 3 only**

Answer: (d)

5. CBDC-BASED DIRECT BENEFIT TRANSFER (DBT)

ET tech



- The initiative will use India's **Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)**, also known as the **Digital Rupee (₹₹)**, for delivering selected government benefits.
- It aims to make welfare transfers **faster, more transparent and traceable**.
- The initiative represents a step towards integrating **digital currency with public-service delivery**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

What is CBDC?

- **Central Bank Digital Currency** is a digital form of a country's sovereign currency issued by its **central bank**.
- India's CBDC is called the **Digital Rupee (₹₹)** and is issued by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**.

CBDC vs Cryptocurrency

- **CBDC:** Sovereign currency, issued and backed by the central bank.

- **Cryptocurrency:** Generally privately issued/decentralised and not sovereign legal tender.

KEY FEATURES

- DBT beneficiaries can receive eligible government benefits through **CBDC wallets**.
- Transfers can be made directly by the government to beneficiaries.
- Digital transactions create an auditable trail.
- Can reduce dependence on cash-based delivery mechanisms.
- The pilot can provide insights for **wider adoption of CBDC-based welfare payments**.

SIGNIFICANCE

Better DBT Delivery

- Direct transfer can reduce intermediaries and improve transparency.
- Helps strengthen the government's **targeted welfare delivery system**.

Financial Inclusion

- Can introduce beneficiaries to new forms of digital payments.
- May expand access to formal digital financial infrastructure.

Digital Public Infrastructure

- Builds upon India's broader digital ecosystem for payments and public-service delivery.

CBDC Adoption

- Provides a practical use case for India's Digital Rupee beyond ordinary retail payments.

CHALLENGES

- Digital literacy among beneficiaries.
- Smartphone/device and connectivity requirements.
- Cybersecurity and fraud risks.
- Ensuring access for people who face difficulties using digital wallets.
- Need for strong grievance-redress mechanisms.

WAY FORWARD

- Provide beneficiary awareness and digital-literacy support.
- Ensure offline/low-connectivity solutions where required.

- Strengthen cybersecurity and fraud monitoring.
- Maintain alternative payment channels for vulnerable beneficiaries.
- Evaluate the pilot before expanding it nationwide.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

CBDC

CBDC = Central Bank Digital Currency

India's CBDC:

- **Name:** Digital Rupee / e₹
- **Issuer:** RBI
- **Nature:** Digital sovereign currency

CBDC Types

- **Retail CBDC (CBDC-R):** For individuals and businesses.
- **Wholesale CBDC (CBDC-W):** Primarily for financial institutions and wholesale transactions.

DBT

- **Direct Benefit Transfer** aims to transfer government benefits directly to beneficiaries, reducing leakages and intermediaries.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding India's CBDC:

1. India's CBDC is issued by the Reserve Bank of India.
2. CBDC represents a digital form of sovereign currency.
3. CBDC is the same as a decentralised cryptocurrency.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) **1, 2 and 3**

Answer: (b)